



CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
Department of Toxic Substances Control

PRESS RELEASE

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Maureen F. Gorsen, Director

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Contact: Claudia Loomis
(916) 255-6578
CLoomis@dtsc.ca.gov

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TOXIC SUBSTANCES CONTROL ANNOUNCES CLEANUP COMPLETE AT MESA DE ORO

*DTSC certifies protection of residents from exposure to
arsenic in mine tailings*

SACRAMENTO – The California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) has notified the City of Sutter Creek and Honeywell, Inc. that measures used to provide a barrier from sub-surface soils contaminated with mine tailings is complete at Mesa De Oro. An operation and maintenance agreement for the slope, Sutter Creek Ordinance 15.37, and a Land Use Covenant have been established to ensure continued protection from naturally occurring arsenic into the future. Certification means that all hazardous waste remedial (cleanup) work has been completed.

“The operation and maintenance agreement, city ordinance, and Land Use Covenant ensure that these protective measures are retained,” said DTSC Director Maureen F. Gorsen. “Our work with the U.S. EPA has secured a comprehensive response at Mesa De Oro, and we certify that the area is and will continue to be safe.”

Protective measures at Mesa De Oro and surrounding subdivisions included placing a one- to two-foot clean soil barrier over properties with exposed mine tailings. The slopes of the mesa were capped with eight inches of clean soil within an eight-inch-thick honey-comb textile material. Honeywell, Inc. will retain the responsibility of maintaining the slope cap.

In 1994, DTSC and the United States Environmental Protection Agency found arsenic in the soil of residential properties in and around the housing subdivision. The soils were contaminated with elevated levels of arsenic that were associated with historic mining of the Central Eureka Mine. In 1996, U.S. EPA completed its work at Mesa De Oro to control the threat of human exposure to arsenic-contaminated soils.

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FOR GENERAL INQUIRIES: Contact the Department of Toxic Substances Control by phone at (800) 728-6942 or visit www.dtsc.ca.gov. To report illegal handling, discharge, or disposal of hazardous waste, call the Waste Alert Hotline at (800) 698-6942.

The mission of the Department of Toxic Substances Control is to provide the highest level of safety, and to protect public health and the environment from toxic harm.